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AN EVALUATION OF THE OPINIONS OF STUDENTS OF GERMAN

OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LABORATORY

(TITLE)

BY

F. DALE BROWN

PLAN B PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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Edu. 489

Special Problems in Audio-Visual Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY,
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1965

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS
FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE DEGREE, M.S. IN ED.

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DEPARTMENT HEAD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ralph H. Waltz of Ohio State University was accredited as being the first person to use the term "language laboratory". Waltz brought the techniques and equipment of the speech and hearing specialist into the modern language department. In three articles in the Modern Language Journal, Waltz described the first Ohio State University installation, its subsequent improvements, and its use.¹ This laboratory served students of the Spanish language as early as 1924. The Ohio State University laboratory was like the present day laboratories in many respects: a central source for many sets of headphones, the use of spaced pauses for student responses, and the possibility of individual recording and playback by students.

Experimentation with auditory aids to language teaching is almost as old as the phonograph. William Parker wrote about a French conversational course which was produced in England on an Edison Cylinder as early as 1904. This new device was soon being tried on classes at Yale University and elsewhere.² In 1918, C. C. Clarke of Yale wrote that he had been

¹Ralph H. Waltz, "The Laboratory as an aid to Modern Language Teaching," Modern Language Journal, XV (October, 1930), 27-29; "Language Laboratory Administration," Modern Language Journal, XVI (December, 1931), 217-27; "Some Results of Laboratory Training," Modern Language Journal, XVI (January, 1932), 299-305.

²Elton Hocking, "Language Laboratory and Language Learning," Technological Development Project of the National Education Association, Monograph Two (Washington, D. C.: Department of Audiovisual Instruction, National Education Association of the United States, 1964), p. 11.

using "talking machines" for a dozen years. He set forth principles which sound very contemporary: the machine always provides the same model; it is tireless; it does not replace the teacher; and recordings should be made by native speakers.³

But Clarke used the phonograph only as a playback. The students did no recording. The primitive machine lacked adequate fidelity for language teaching. The profession had to wait for the advent of recorded discs.

During World War I, several recording companies advertised language courses on disc recordings.⁴ Shortly thereafter, dictating machines by Edison and Dictaphone were developed for business. These were used in the field of foreign language for recording. In 1929, a pioneer laboratory was installed at Middlebury College with 10 booths, each furnished with a phonograph as well as a disc cutter.⁵

Soon to appear on the commercial market was a device commercially known as the "Mirrophone". This was simply an early magnetic recorder which provided one minute of recording on a steel loop. The "Mirrophone" was followed shortly by the wire recorder. A wire recorder was a single-unit device which magnetically recorded sound on wire. At any point the wire could be reversed, and the recorded passage was ready for re-play. The same wire could be used over and over again. As new material was recorded, the old was automatically erased. Various models

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

of the wire recorder were available on the market. However, the audio fidelity was not high, and editing and splicing were difficult. Tangling of the wire was almost impossible to avoid when the wire was broken. It was rejoined by tying a knot in the wire. A variant of the wire recorder used a cartridge which was permanently loaded and thus presumably was proof against breaking. However, the wire in the cartridge would break. In order to have it repaired, it had to be sent back to the factory. Because of the maintenance problems, this type of recorder was also later abandoned.

The "tape recorder-reproducer" was soon introduced. It used a magnetic tape. This was a quarter-inch ribbon of paper coated with particles of iron oxide. The superiority of this process was immediately apparent in the improved fidelity of sound, ease of editing, and repair of breakage. A few years later, the plastic base replaced paper. This was an advancement. Breakage was now nearly overcome except in case of faulty equipment or operation. Tapes could be edited or erased, thus providing more individualized instruction. There was later various modifications of the plastic base, providing greater tensile strength and better durability. Present day language laboratory tape usually has a tough mylar base.

The tape recorder itself was gradually improved. The modifications of the tape recorder were primarily refinements rather than changes of the basic design.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the Army and Navy realized that many officers and enlisted men would be required to handle the delicate problems of military government in occupied territory. Personnel would be required to take over control of the conquered territory immediately after the Army

or Navy landed, and further personnel, possibly civilian, would be needed to continue this control after the armed forces had moved on to further conquests. The Navy concerned itself with training personnel who would organize local governments in numerous islands in the Pacific. The Army would concern itself with training personnel who would eventually provide temporary military governments in large land areas, as in Europe where cultural patterns similar to the United States were encountered. The languages of these territories had also to be studied and learned. Not only was it desirable that the officers and men be able to understand the language as spoken by natives, but that they be competent speakers of the language. The Foreign Area and Language Program of the Area Specialized Training Program was created for the large group of men of the nonofficer rank who would assist with the duties delegated by the officers.

During the fall of 1943, the United States Army employed an intensive oral practice of foreign languages for trainees in the Army Specialized Training Program. Emphasis was placed on teaching the trainees to speak the language fluently with near-native pronunciation. To achieve these goals, intensive courses were established requiring fifteen to eighteen contact hours per week. The courses were handled in the Army by senior instructors and drill-masters who spoke the language. In some cases, the student-teacher ratio was as low as one to two or three. Most of the learning was based on conversational scripts. After the drill-master had recited or read the script a sufficient number of times, the students would be divided into two groups of four to five each and would rehearse with each other the material at hand. Later they would be divided into five groups of two each and again would converse with one another, still repeating the material for the day. The courses were

intensive and were limited to language study, with the culture and geographic area of the foreign land complementing the language study.

Public school language teachers discovered that the tape recorder could provide simultaneous oral-aural drill as a substitute for the small group practice of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). Various attempts to adopt the methods of the ASTP and their techniques were tried in the schools. The tape recorder and with it the language laboratory seemed to provide a substitute for the small group practice. The superiority of hearing and speaking the foreign language rather than a study of grammar and translation had been submitted by the ASTP. The language laboratory served to approximate the small group practice conducted by the ASTP.

The National Defense Education Act of 1958, later extended in 1964, provided schools with matching funds for the purchase of materials and equipment to improve instruction in science, mathematics and foreign language. When these new funds were made available, there was a rapid expansion of the language laboratory.⁶ In 1957-58 the United States Office of Education listed only sixty-four (64) language laboratories in the United States. By 1963, the Office of Education estimated there were 10,000 language laboratories in operation.⁷ With the rapid expansion of

⁶Joseph C. Hutchinson, "The National Situation in the Field of Language Laboratories," International Journal of American Linguistics, Part II, XXVI (October, 1960), 4-5.

⁷Hocking, op. cit., p. 9.

Statement of the Problem

During the school year 1963-64, the writer of this paper was the instructor for four classes of students studying the German language. It was observed that the students might have had a distinct liking or disliking for the language laboratory. Their interest in using the laboratory appeared to vary directly with their grades in the foreign language course.

Through the actual experience of working with these students, it was observed that these students having grades of A or B, preferred working in classroom discussions in the spoken language rather than working in the language laboratory. Students whose grades were average or below, preferred working in the language laboratory rather than participating in classroom discussions.

It was also observed that if the material to be studied in the language laboratory was not entirely new, the above average students complained upon going into the language laboratory. On the other hand, the students who were below average in language facility, welcomed the language laboratory period. They would often request that the class go into the language laboratory even though it was not a regularly scheduled period. Many of the below average language students, when in the laboratory, would request that the teacher monitor their responses or dialogues. They would seemingly take pride in completing a satisfactory series of responses, even though they might not have participated in class.

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to attempt to determine students' opinions concerning interest in the foreign language laboratory with regard to:

- (1) time spent in the language laboratory
- (2) use of materials in the language laboratory
- (3) participation in the language laboratory.

An attempt was made to determine what relation existed, if any, between student opinions concerning the language laboratory and student achievement in language proficiency based upon a semester foreign language grade.

Method of the Study

An opinionnaire (Appendix A) was devised to attempt to determine students' opinions concerning the use of the language laboratory in foreign language instruction. No attempt was made to determine the validity of this instrument.

Permission was requested to survey the Decatur School District #61 students, enrolled in the study of German through Mrs. Inabell Kirby, Director of Research for the school district in Decatur, Illinois. The five German teachers in the three schools of Eisenhower High School, MacArthur High School, and Stephen Decatur High School, were willing to cooperate in administering the opinionnaire to the German students. Each teacher received approximately forty student opinionnaires and one-hundred and fifty mark-sensing IBM cards on which the students were to mark their responses together with the necessary IBM pencils. These teachers were also requested to remind the students that they were to mark only one

response to each item on the opinionnaire and that if the student desired to change one of the responses, he was to completely erase the previous response.

After the administering of the instrument to first, second, third, and fourth year students studying German in Decatur, Illinois, the response cards were collected. These response cards were processed at the Data Processing Center at Eastern Illinois University.

Cards were punched to correspond with the mark-sense response card of each of the students. An "A" response of the student to an item on the opinionnaire would be punched as a nine (9). If the student marked a "B" response, the number eight (8) was punched on the card. A "C" response used the seven (7), "D" the six (6), and "F" the five (5). Because there were only five possibilities on the opinionnaire for responses, the numbers 4, 3, 2, and 1 were not used.

The cards were then processed in an IBM computer which was programmed to total the numbers of items one through twelve of the opinionnaire already punched in the card, and punch this total into the card. The cards were fed into a card printing machine which read the card punching, and printed the numerical values at the top of the card. This showed a total of four-hundred and forty-three (443) students who completed the opinionnaire to determine their opinions concerning the foreign language laboratory. Out of the four hundred and forty-three students, a total of twenty-three students (5.2 per cent of the total number of students sampled) did not correctly mark one or more of their responses on the response card. These students' cards were omitted from the final tabulations, leaving a total of four hundred and twenty students' cards which were used as the sample for this study.

The cards were then grouped according to their fall semester grade in German in order to attempt to determine if there was any relationship between student achievement in the foreign language and the students' opinions concerning the foreign language laboratory.

The measure of student achievement in the foreign language was the fall semester grade in German which they received during the school year 1964-65.

Development of the Opinionnaire

The opinionnaire used in this study was devised to determine student opinions concerning the foreign language laboratory.

Approximately thirty-five first and second year students studying French at Cumberland High School in Toledo, Illinois, were informally interviewed in an attempt to provide a format for the opinionnaire. These students were requested to state what they liked and disliked about the foreign language laboratory and how they would improve their foreign language instruction. No records were kept of the informal interview and no student was identified. Thus the students were requested to give a frank answer in offering their opinions. A majority of the students' reasons for liking or disliking the language laboratory were the amount of time spent in the language laboratory, the use of materials in the language laboratory, and their participation in the language laboratory.

The first twelve items on the opinionnaire were constructed to attempt to determine the students' opinions concerning the language laboratory. The last four items on the opinionnaire provided information about the students.

Each student was requested to mark the letter of the response to each of the items on the opinionnaire which best expressed his feelings and opinions toward that item. An "A" response indicated that the student strongly preferred the classroom; a "B" response indicated that he preferred the classroom as compared to the language laboratory; a "C" response indicated indifference and neither preferred the classroom nor the language laboratory; a "D" response indicated that the student preferred the language laboratory as compared to the classroom; and that an "E" response indicated that the student strongly preferred the language laboratory as compared to the classroom.

After the original tabulation of data was completed, an error was discovered in the construction of the opinionnaire. Item #8 on the opinionnaire was found to be improperly stated (Appendix B). Therefore, item #8 was deleted, scores subtracted, and a retabulation figured for the remaining eleven items on the opinionnaire.

Limitations of the Study

The measure of student achievement in the foreign language was the fall semester grade in German during the school year 1964-65 which they received. Since five different teachers were involved in the grading of these students, it is possible that these teachers may have had different bases for arriving at the final grade. Therefore, some of these grades may not have been equivalent.

The students' opinions were evaluated only in terms of the achievement of those students, as designated by the fall semester grade in German. No attempt was made to evaluate the students' responses in any other terms. No evaluation was made of the responses of the students to each individual item on the opinionnaire.

The results of this study were limited to the students formally enrolled in the study of German in a single midwestern Illinois city.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature was made to attempt to determine what research had been conducted concerning the effect of the foreign language laboratory on student opinion in foreign language instruction. There have been many articles written concerning the part that the language laboratory has played in generating interest, producing motivation, and contributing to the acceleration of student progress. Mill wrote that a child's attitude toward subject matter often sets up "a process of selective attention" and that "what he will learn is determined in part by his readiness to receive."¹⁰

Young concluded that interest in the language learning picked up among his students when a language laboratory was used in the foreign language instruction.¹¹

Giuliano takes a negative attitude to the need of the foreign language laboratory.

¹⁰Cyril R. Mill, "Attitudes Affect Pupils' Learning," Educational Leadership, XVII, No. 4 (January, 1960), Educational Press Association.

¹¹Bilaine Young, "A Do-It-Yourself Language Lab," Modern Language Journal, XLIII, No. 5 (May, 1959), 221-223.

In the past few years hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent in the establishment of language laboratories. In general they may have proved highly successful in developing a students' oral and aural skills. The rush to work with mechanical devices has become so widespread, however, that some administrators are beginning to lose sight of the fact that similar results can be achieved in the classroom simply by changing the method of instruction.¹²

The only research discovered on student opinions was that of the Board of Education of the City of New York. The Bureau of Audio-Visual Instruction conducted research for four years on the teaching of French in high school with and without the use of the language laboratory.

Ninth year lab pupils beginning French develop a degree of fluency in speech significantly greater than non-lab groups, both groups using a strictly audio-lingual method.

Tenth year groups studying second year French develop with the use of the lab, significant superiority in fluency and intonation.

Eleventh year lab groups show no greater improvements in speech characteristics, but develop significantly greater ability to understand French when spoken at both rapid and slow rates of speech.

Gains which were made by laboratory groups in speech and listening skills were achieved without loss in traditional skills as measured by a standardized French test.¹³

They also stated that the language lab might have an effect on motivation to continue language study. They suggested that this might have been the reason why a great proportion of the language laboratory students elected the optional fourth year of French study.¹⁴ They conclude:

While it cannot be conclusively proved that the laboratory was the motivating factor, it is of interest to note that in both experimental schools a much higher percentage of students who had had laboratory work continued to study French beyond the high school graduation or college entrance requirement.¹⁵

¹²William Giuliano, "Aural-Oral Proficiency Without Laboratories," Modern Language Journal, XLV, No. 4 (April, 1961), 171-173.

¹³The ETL Newsletter, IV, No. 6 (February 1, 1964), p. 6.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

Politzer, in trying to determine if well-motivated persevering students were able to achieve more by traditional methods or by using the language laboratory, studied the relation of student effort to achievement and the contribution of the language laboratory to student achievement. He compared two-hundred and fifty (250) first semester

French students taught at Harvard without laboratory practice and three hundred and ninety-six (396) first semester French students taught at Michigan, with laboratory practice. It was found that at Harvard, no one of the "hard-workers" among the poorer students made his way into the A group, and quite a few failed; at Michigan very frequent laboratory attendance enabled some students of lesser aptitude to achieve an A in the course, and no one of those who spent a large amount of time in the laboratory ended up in the D/F group. Politzer concluded that one of the most important functions of the language laboratory is to give the individual student the opportunity to make his learning count.¹⁶

¹⁶Review of Educational Research, Vol. XXXI, 1961, p. 188.

CHAPTER III

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter will deal with an interpretation of the data collected from the opinionnaire (Appendix A). The instructions with the opinionnaire requested that the students mark the letter of their responses to each item on the opinionnaire on a mark-sense card. Through IBM processes, the students' response cards were grouped according to the student's fall semester grade in German to indicate the student's achievement in language proficiency.

All A scores were grouped into one category. The B, C, D and F scores were each grouped separately in a similar manner. The students' fall semester grade in German was the only grouping of the students to evaluate their responses. Table I (Page 17) shows the frequency distribution of the sum of the numerical equivalents of the responses to the opinionnaire.

The largest numerical equivalent of the letter responses was a nine (9), based upon the positions of the response on the IBM cards. The largest total score of any one student would be a numerical equivalent of ninety-nine (99). This would occur only if the student marked an "A" response to each of the eleven items on the opinionnaire. A total of ninety-nine would indicate that the student held the strongest possible preference on the opinionnaire for using only the classroom method as compared to the use of the language laboratory in correlation with classroom methods.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' TOTAL SCORE ON
OPINIONNAIRE GROUPED ACCORDING TO LAST SEMESTER
GERMAN GRADE

Total score on opinionnaire	Frequency of A students	Frequency of B students	Frequency of C students	Frequency of D students	Frequency of F students
99	0	0	0	0	0
98	1	0	0	0	0
97	0	0	0	0	0
96	1	1	0	0	0
95	3	2	1	0	0
94	0	1	0	0	0
93	3	0	0	0	0
92	0	1	0	0	0
91	1	1	0	0	0
90	1	1	1	0	0
89	2	2	2	1	0
88	1	1	2	1	1
87	4	4	1	0	0
86	3	1	1	1	0
85	2	4	1	0	0
84	6	2	1	0	0
83	0	6	3	0	1
82	6	5	2	0	0
81	3	5	3	2	1
80	7	4	5	0	0
79	6	6	4	0	1
78	10	4	5	0	1
77	12	8	5	6	0
76	5	7	4	2	0
75	7	5	6	0	0
74	11	11	6	3	0
73	4	6	8	3	0
72	6	9	9	4	0
71	5	8	3	3	0
70	5	10	3	3	0
69	6	4	8	2	1
68	6	6	8	3	2
67	0	4	1	0	0
66	1	2	4	0	0
65	2	1	2	1	1
64	0	1	2	1	0
63	0	0	2	2	0
62	0	2	0	1	1
61	0	1	0	0	0
60	0	1	0	0	0
59	0	1	0	0	0
58	0	0	0	0	0
57	0	0	0	0	0
56	0	0	0	0	0
55	0	0	0	0	0

The smallest numerical equivalent of the letter responses was a five (5), based upon the position of the response on the IBM card. The smallest total score which a student could have would be a numerical value of fifty-five (55). This would occur if the student marked an "E" response to each of the eleven items on the opinionnaire. A total score of fifty-five would indicate that the student held the strongest possible preference for the language laboratory as compared to only classroom instruction.

The opinionnaire was constructed in such a manner that whenever a student marked a "C" response to an item, this would indicate that the student neither preferred the classroom situation nor the language laboratory. Therefore, if a student marked all the responses "C", this indicated indifference concerning the language laboratory methods in relation to the classroom methods alone. The "C" response was given a numerical value of seven (7), therefore, a totally indifferent score was indicated by a total score on the opinionnaire of seventy-seven (77).

If the students' total score on the opinionnaire was larger than seventy-seven, they were classified as preferring only classroom methods over the language laboratory in conjunction with classroom methods. If the students' total score was less than seventy-seven, they were classified as preferring the use of the language laboratory over the classroom methods alone.

The average score was computed for each of the five groups of students. Table II indicates these averages.

TABLE II

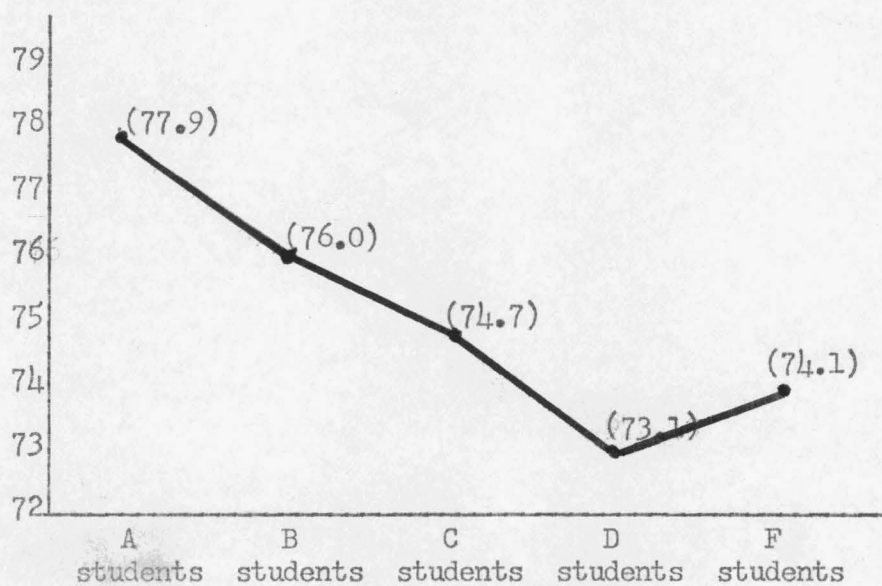
AVERAGE SCORE ON OPINIONNAIRE
OF STUDENTS GROUPED ACCORDING
TO LAST SEMESTER GERMAN GRADE

Group according to last semester grade in German class	Average score on opinionnaire
Average of A students	77.9
Average of B students	76.0
Average of C students	74.7
Average of D students	73.1
Average of F students	74.1

The above scores on the opinionnaire were plotted
on a graph (Figure I).

FIGURE I

GRAPH OF AVERAGE SCORES ON OPINIONNAIRE
ACCORDING TO LAST SEMESTER GERMAN GRADE



Groups of students according
to last semester grade
in German

As the last semester grade in German decreased from an A to an F, the average score on the opinionnaire decreased. The only variation occurred in the F student group. Their average score on the opinionnaire showed a one point increase, rather than the expected decrease. However, there were only ten students who received a fall semester grade in German of an F. As students as a group, indicated a preference for the classroom instruction over the language laboratory. The average scores of the B, C, D, and F groups were all less than seventy-seven. This indicated increasing degrees of preference for the language laboratory over the classroom.

Time Spent in the Language Laboratory

The percentages of the students' responses to items #3, 5, 9, and 12 on the opinionnaire concerning time spent in the language laboratory are shown in Table III.

TABLE III

Category 3 - Time

<u>Rows</u> Grade Received in German	<u>Column 1</u> Strongly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 2</u> Slightly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 3</u> Indifferent	<u>Column 4</u> Slightly Prefer Language Laboratory	<u>Column 5</u> Strongly Prefer Language Laboratory
A	9.0%	10.0%	23.1%	34.0%	23.9%
B	6.3%	10.7%	20.0%	35.7%	27.5%
C	6.1%	5.1%	19.9%	37.4%	31.5%
D	7.1%	5.8%	17.9%	37.1%	32.7%
F	12.5%	10.0%	17.5%	15.0%	45.0%

Columns 1 and 2 appear to indicate no trend in the percentages of responses. However, the percentages in column 5 increase. This might indicate that the students with lower academic grades in German preferred to spend more time in the language laboratory.

Participation in the Language Laboratory

The percentages of the students' responses to items #1, 4, 6, 8, and 10 on the opinionnaire concerning participation in the language laboratory are shown in Table IV.

Table IV

Category 1 - Participation

<u>Rows</u> Grade Received in German	<u>Column 1</u> Strongly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 2</u> Slightly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 3</u> Indifferent	<u>Column 4</u> Slightly Prefer Language Laboratory	<u>Column 5</u> Strongly Prefer Language Laboratory
A	21.1%	24.8%	30.6%	16.2%	7.5%
B	14.2%	27.4%	26.7%	23.2%	8.5%
C	10.8%	24.3%	32.2%	24.3%	8.4%
D	7.2%	20.0%	31.8%	29.2%	11.8%
F	12.0%	14.0%	32.0%	30.0%	20.0%

Reading down the columns 1 and 2, the percentages decrease except for the F students in column 1, and the A students in column 2. In columns 4 and 5, the percentages increase. This would indicate that the higher the grade in German class, the higher percent of responses preferring the

classroom to the language laboratory. The lower the grade in German class, the higher the percent of responses were indicated preferring the language laboratory to the classroom with regard to participation.

Use of Materials in the Language Laboratory

Students' responses to items #2, 7, and 11 were concerned with the use of materials in the language laboratory as compared to the materials used in the classroom.

TABLE V

Category 2 - Use of Materials

<u>Rows</u> Grade Received in German	<u>Column 1</u> Strongly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 2</u> Slightly Prefer Classroom	<u>Column 3</u> Indifferent	<u>Column 4</u> Slightly Prefer Language Laboratory	<u>Column 5</u> Strongly Prefer Language Laboratory
A	18.0%	28.7%	22.8%	23.3%	7.2%
B	18.1%	26.3%	19.6%	26.1%	9.9%
C	14.2%	31.4%	23.0%	22.0%	9.1%
D	12.0%	30.0%	17.0%	30.8%	10.2%
F	26.7%	16.7%	26.7%	20.0%	10.0%

There appears to be in Table V no trend as to the use of materials in the language laboratory over the materials used in the classroom. The students did not show a preference for use of materials in the language laboratory.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This study attempted to determine the relationship, if any, between the students' opinions concerning instruction in the foreign language laboratory, as compared to the classroom, and student achievement in the language proficiency.

Data were collected by evaluating responses on an opinionnaire administered to students in three high schools of District #61, located in Decatur, Illinois. These students were grouped according to their fall semester grade in German during the school year 1964-65.

The choice of responses to each item on the opinionnaire indicated whether the student preferred the language laboratory, was indifferent and neither preferred the language laboratory nor the classroom, or preferred the classroom. The responses to the items used on the opinionnaire were constructed in such a manner that an "A" response of students indicated that they strongly preferred the classroom over the language laboratory. The choice of responses ranged then to the "E" response which indicated that each time the student selected this response, he strongly preferred the language laboratory.

In order to evaluate the students' responses, a numerical value was obtained by processing the student response cards in an IBM computer. A total of the numerical values was also obtained on each student's card. An average score of the students grouped according to their fall semester grade in German was obtained. These average scores suggested a tendency

for a preference for the language laboratory over the classroom. These average scores decreased as the grade in German decreased. Therefore, it was concluded that as students' grades in German decrease, those students' preference for the language laboratory over the classroom increases.

The opinionnaire used as the instrument to determine student opinions concerning the interest in the foreign language laboratory and the classroom, was constructed with concern for the reaction of the student to:

- (1) the amount of time spent in the language laboratory
- (2) the use of materials in the language laboratory
- (3) student participation in the language laboratory as compared with classroom participation.

In each of these three categories, a table was constructed to help analyze the data. In regard to time spent in the language laboratory, the percentages of responses preferring the language laboratory to the classroom increased as the grade in German decreased. Students' preference of the language laboratory over the classroom increased as the German grade decreased.

The table regarding the use of materials in the language laboratory indicated no trends. It is possible that the opinionnaire did not measure the students' opinions concerning the use of materials in the two methods of instruction.

The percentages of responses concerning participation in the foreign language laboratory increased the columns of preferring and strongly preferring the language laboratory over the classroom as the grade in German decreased. It was concluded that as students' grades decrease in German, those students more strongly prefer participating in the language laboratory than in the classroom.

Therefore this study confirmed the observations of the writer of this paper that a relationship did exist between student opinions concerning the language laboratory and student achievement in language proficiency as measured by the semester grade in German.

Recommendations

Since the opinionnaire used in this study was not validated, it is recommended that before this instrument be readministered, that it be validated.

An attempt should be made to determine what other factors are involved in influencing student opinions besides time, participation, and use of materials in the language laboratory. Teachers' attitudes toward the language laboratory might influence student opinions. The number of years a student has used the language laboratory might also be a factor.

This study was limited to a single school system in one area of the country. Other school systems might be using different procedures in the language laboratory which could affect student opinions concerning the language laboratory.

It is recommended that other methods of measuring student achievement be explored in determining the students' language proficiency.

Since the materials used in the language laboratory were not measured, a study of the kinds of materials used in both the language laboratory and the classroom might be of significance. It might attempt to determine what kinds of materials most strongly influence student opinions of foreign language instruction. These different types of instructional materials might include recorded conversations of native speakers in the foreign tongue. Visual learning materials such as

35mm slides, or motion pictures might be correlated with foreign language instruction in the language laboratory. Teacher made materials or stories in the foreign language studied, or a combination of all of these are variations of learning materials which might have a favorable effect on student opinions.

The students might be allowed to progress on to new programs upon satisfactory completion of the material being used for instruction. This could permit the student to proceed at his own rate of ability and might help create interest in the material being studied.

The use of the language laboratory might be made available before and after school for those students desiring extra practice. If the students desire to take recorded materials home after school for practice, extra tapes or records could be duplicated from the master tapes or records for student use.

Individual listening and recording booths could be made available in an instructional materials center where students might practice the foreign language during free time. Duplicated materials used in the language laboratory could be made available in an instructional materials center for the students to use in the individual booths.

A series of correlated slides and tape recordings might be made available for students to use in foreign language instruction. These slides could show the culture of the foreign country being studied along with a recording of native speakers which described the visual presentation. This narration could be programmed to the learner's language achievement so as to be more meaningful to the student.

APPENDIX A
STUDENT OPINIONNAIRE

MILLERS FALLS

ERASE

COTTON CONTENT

Following is a list of statements concerning foreign language instruction. Your instructor will give you an IBM card upon which you will mark your answers with the special pencil distributed by the teacher. Please be very careful to mark only in the designated area. If you should decide to change one of your responses be sure to erase your incorrect answer completely. For each statement fill in the letter of the response which you feel expresses your feelings and attitudes toward that statement. Please mark only your best choice, and remember to mark only one response for each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be absolutely honest in your answers. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1. I prefer to ask questions in the language laboratory because I don't feel as embarrassed as I do in the classroom.
 - A. Strongly Disagree
 - B. Disagree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly Agree
2. I prefer pronunciation drills in the classroom as compared to the language laboratory.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree
3. I would prefer going to the language laboratory _____.
 - A. Not at all
 - B. Once a week
 - C. Twice a week
 - D. Three times a week
 - E. Every day
4. I ask _____ questions in the classroom as in the language laboratory.
 - A. Many more
 - B. More
 - C. The same number of
 - D. Less
 - E. Many Less
5. I would prefer spending _____ time in the language laboratory.
 - A. Much less
 - B. Less
 - C. The same amount of
 - D. More
 - E. Much more

6. I would prefer reciting by myself in the language laboratory because only the teacher can hear me.
 - A. Strongly disagree
 - B. Disagree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly Agree
7. I prefer pronunciation drills in the language laboratory as compared to the classroom.
 - A. Strongly disagree
 - B. Disagree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly Agree
8. I like the language laboratory because I don't have to do very much.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree
9. I would prefer remaining in the classroom and not going to the language laboratory.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree
10. I never feel embarrassed to ask questions in the classroom.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree
11. The drills in the language laboratory are boring.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree
12. The time spent in the language laboratory is wasted.
 - A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly Disagree

13. I am a _____.
A. Freshman
B. Sophomore
C. Junior
D. Senior
14. I am a _____.
A. Male
B. Female
15. I am presently in _____ year German.
A. first
B. second
C. third
D. fourth
16. My last semester's grade in German was _____.
A. A
B. B
C. C
D. D
E. F

MILLERS FALLS
ERASE
CONTENT

APPENDIX B

ITEM #8

Item #8 on the opinionnaire was found to be improperly stated:

I like the language laboratory because I don't
have to do very much.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Indifferent
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree

If the student marked an A response, for example, to this item, it would tend to indicate that he strongly preferred the language laboratory. On all other items in the opinionnaire, an A response would indicate that the student strongly preferred the classroom situation. Thus the choice of these responses on item #8 were contrary to form.

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